

Profit and Public Health in Recreational Facilities

Dana Lee Olstad MSc RD

Kim Raine PhD RD

Linda McCargar PhD RD

University of Alberta



Taking Action

Evidence shows healthy foods can be profitable:

- 1 Imitate other companies that are selling healthy food:
 - Use attractive packaging
 - Pay attention to product placement
 - Make healthy items the default items in combo meals
 - Offer variety
 - Use colorful displays

- 2 Use the tools and resources available at www.healthyalberta.ca.



Can industry and recreational facilities be partners in offering healthier foods? An industry perspective

The Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth were created to **ensure children have access to healthy food** in recreational facilities.

Interviews with managers from industry (food service and vending) who were and were not using the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines found:

- ✓ Industry supports nutrition guidelines in theory.
- ✓ **Profit is a main factor influencing decisions.**
- ✓ Nutrition guidelines recommending the sale of healthier options are perceived to be incompatible with:
 - Products available in the marketplace, as many do not qualify as healthy choices.
 - Consumer taste preferences.
 - Prices consumers are willing to pay.
- ✓ Some managers use nutrition guidelines because they see potential **for long-term profitability** as consumers are demanding healthier foods.
- ✓ Widespread voluntary uptake of nutrition guidelines is unlikely because managers believe offering healthier foods is not in their **short-term financial interests**.

The authors acknowledge Jamaika Lukac for assistance in preparing this summary

The full study is published in Public Health Nutrition 16(5):815-823, 2013.